

# Wisconsin's Early Childhood Advisory Council

## Operating Principles

ECAC Website:

<http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ecac/default.htm>

### **Background:**

The Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) was established by [Executive Order](#) in November 2008 under the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007, which required a State Council to be created that would build upon the existing statewide early childhood programs and services. The ECAC builds upon the work of the Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (WECCP), the Children's Trust Fund Board, Partners for Wisconsin Economic Success, Wisconsin State Birth to 3 Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), and other organizations interested in early childhood education and care.

### **Vision:**

Every child will be healthy, nurtured, safe and successful.

### **Mission:**

The mission of the ECAC is to help ensure that all children and families in Wisconsin have access to high quality early childhood programs and services.

### **Responsibilities of the ECAC:**

- Conducting a periodic statewide needs assessment concerning the quality and availability of early childhood education and development programs;
- Identifying opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among federally- and state-funded child development, child care, and early childhood education programs and services;
- Developing recommendations for increasing the overall participation of children in existing federal, state, and local child care and early childhood education programs, including outreach to under-represented and special populations; and
- Developing recommendations regarding statewide professional development and career advancement plans for early childhood providers.

### **Membership:**

Members of the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) are appointed by the Governor as per federal requirements and executive order. The [Head Start Act of 2007](#) specified organizations that should be represented. The Governor's appointed Co-Chairs are the Department of Children and Families Secretary and Department of Public Instruction State Superintendent.

Members include high level leaders from state agencies, advocacy organizations, foundations, businesses, and higher education that are involved with early learning and care, health, child welfare and mental health, and provision of services to young children and their families.

**Meetings:**

The ECAC will meet as often as necessary but, not less than four (4) times per calendar year. Minutes will be kept of all ECAC meetings and will be approved by the ECAC at a subsequent ECAC meeting. The minutes will be posted online at the ECAC website for viewing by the public and members.

**Substitutions:**

When ECAC members are not available to attend a particular meeting:

- The members may send a representative to enable the constituency to have representation at the meetings. Substitutes for ECAC members shall not have voting privileges. Members who are sending a substitute will send notification to the ECAC staff indicating who the representative will be.
- When a member is absent or elects to send a substitute, it will be counted as an absence on part of the member. Reoccurring absences may result in a withdrawal of appointment.

**Voting:**

- Each ECAC member is entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote.
- A vote of the majority present at any meeting is necessary to approve an action taken by the ECAC.
- In the event of a tie vote, the ECAC co-chairs will cast a single deciding vote.
- No member of the ECAC will cast a vote on any matter which would provide direct financial benefit to that member or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest.
- In the instances where an ECAC member is employed by an organization which is a recipient of financial support from the State of Wisconsin or any affiliates, that member must disclose such potential conflict of interest.

**Accountability:**

The ECAC annually reports to the Governor on its progress and achievements and identifies future work.

**Public Meetings:**

The ECAC and Steering Committee meetings are open to the public and will provide an opportunity for public comment.

**Participation by non-ECAC members:**

Non-ECAC members are welcome to attend ECAC meetings. Visitors shall not occupy seats at the ECAC meeting table but will occupy seating available around the sides of the meeting room.

- An opportunity for public comment will be held during each ECAC meeting. Prior to the beginning of the ECAC meeting, non-ECAC members may sign-up to address the ECAC. Non-ECAC members will be given up to five (5) minutes to speak depending on the number of speakers registered.

**Relationship with Other Initiatives:**

The ECAC will work with other early childhood initiatives to avoid duplication of efforts. The ECAC may draw from these initiatives' work to inform their deliberations prior to making recommendations.

**Rules of Order:**

Formal action of the ECAC will be conducted by *Robert's Rules of Order* (most recent edition). Additionally, the ECAC will comply with the following rules:

- The ECAC will limit discussion to items on the proposed agenda. Additional agenda items may be submitted to the ECAC staff at least one month in advance of any scheduled meeting. The Steering Committee and the ECAC co-chairs will determine and approve the final ECAC meeting agenda.
- Persons or organizations wishing to address the ECAC may be placed on the agenda by making a request to the ECAC staff at least one month before any scheduled meeting.

**ECAC Staff:**

- ECAC staff is expected to attend all ECAC meetings.
- Staff will be responsible for: taking minutes; distributing minutes and correspondence to the ECAC members; making necessary meeting arrangements; assisting ECAC members in reimbursement of expenses; supporting the Steering Committee and Project Teams and other duties as needed by the ECAC.
- Staff is not eligible to vote on any matters of official ECAC business.

**Structure: Steering Committee**

In 2011, the ECAC combined three existing committees into one Steering Committee. The Steering Committee was made up of the co-chairs of the three previous groups and is appointed by the ECAC co-chairs to serve. The Steering Committee is co-chaired by ECAC members and charged with the following responsibilities:

- Providing ongoing input to current and future funding opportunities
- Coordinating and advancing the work of the ECAC
- Guiding and coordinating the work of ECAC project teams to ensure systemic approaches to ECAC priorities
- Reviewing and assessing all formal recommendations for consideration by the ECAC
- Finalizing ECAC meeting agendas
- Preparing the annual report to the Governor, including draft recommendations for ECAC approval
- Coordinating meetings with project team chairs to ensure needed collaboration and consistency across various domains

The Steering Committee works closely with the assigned staff and project teams to accomplish ECAC goals and objectives. This reflects a structure that replaces the prior Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners – WECCP Action Team – while retaining the other structures of WECCP, including the list serve, website, videoconferences and coaches. In addition, the Committee attempts to connect other early childhood stakeholders with the appropriate Project

Teams to ensure a comprehensive, quality system of early care and education for Wisconsin's youngest citizens.

### **Structure: ECAC Project Teams**

Project Teams shall be designated as needed by the ECAC to serve functions specified by the ECAC. Such Project Teams shall exist for periods of time deemed necessary by the charge to the Project Team by the ECAC. A list of the current ECAC Project Teams will be maintained on the official ECAC website.

- The ECAC Steering Committee will help create the project teams' overall purpose statements and offer suggestions for membership.
- A member of the ECAC Steering Committee/Staff Team will be assigned to be a liaison between the ECAC Steering Committee and the Project Team.
- Each project team will have at least two co-chairs representing the public and private sectors. These co-chairs will finalize membership, define key considerations, define reporting processes, and set timelines.

Project Teams will serve to inform and make recommendations to the ECAC. The ECAC will make final decisions. The ECAC Steering Committee determines what reports and recommendations are submitted to the ECAC. The following procedures apply for transmitting recommendations and findings from teams to the ECAC:

- Project Teams submit reports to the ECAC Steering Committee;
- the Steering Committee determines if report goes to the ECAC; and
- ECAC will decide whether to approve the committee recommendation and/or adopt the recommendation as that of the ECAC.

Efforts will be made to create a balance of ECAC members/designees and non-members serving on Project Teams. Each project teams will consist of membership from:

- within the ECAC members/designees
- related program areas with state departments
- relevant agencies and associations
- established input groups
- other stakeholders

### **Structure: Cross Department Staff Resources**

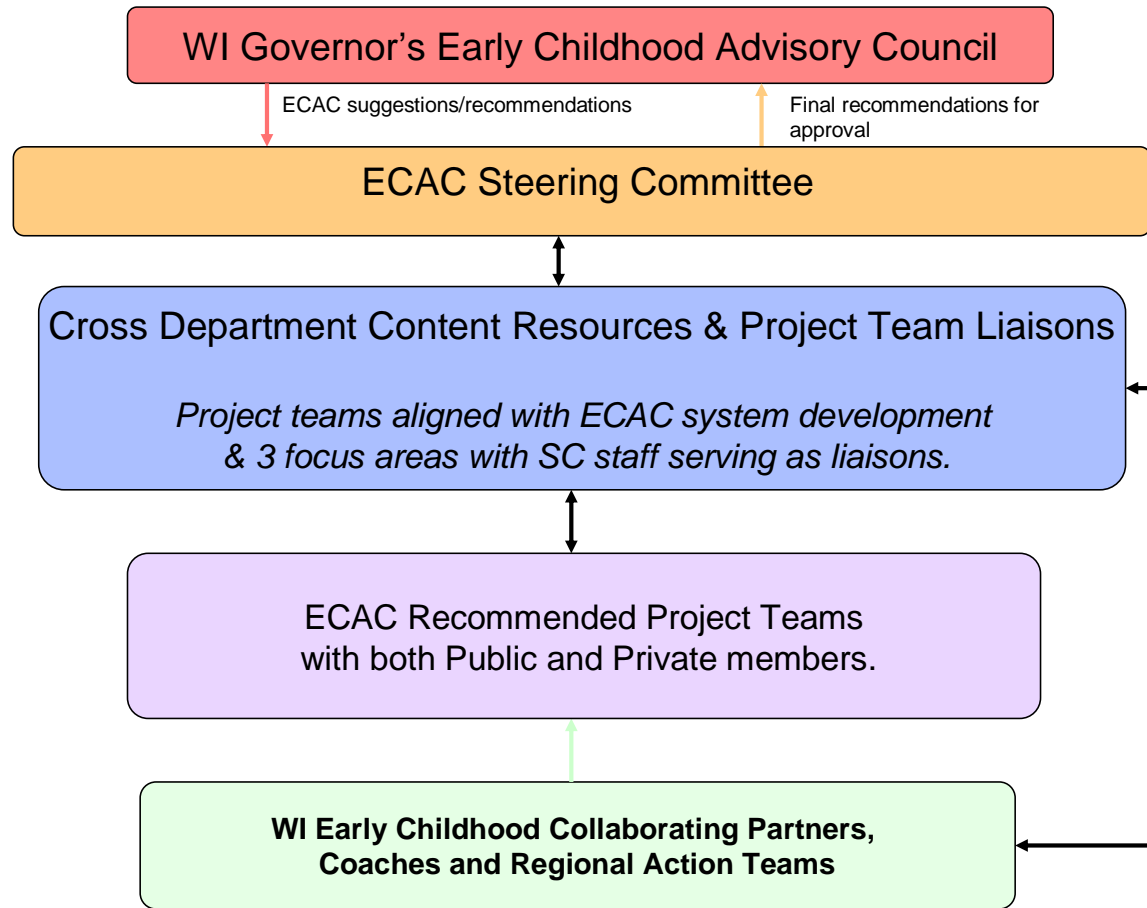
In 2012, each state department identified a list of department staff to serve as resources to support the work of the ECAC and the Project Teams. These Cross Department Staff Resources will:

- Reduce fragmented activities and promote interagency coordination and collaboration
- Support the ECAC Steering committee and various committees
- Align work of ECAC and departments
- Maximize state resources, reduce duplication, and identify gaps

### **Amendments:**

These Operating Principles may be amended when necessary by two-thirds majority of the ECAC membership. Proposed amendments must be submitted for review by the full ECAC at least one (1) month prior to the meeting where a vote will take place.

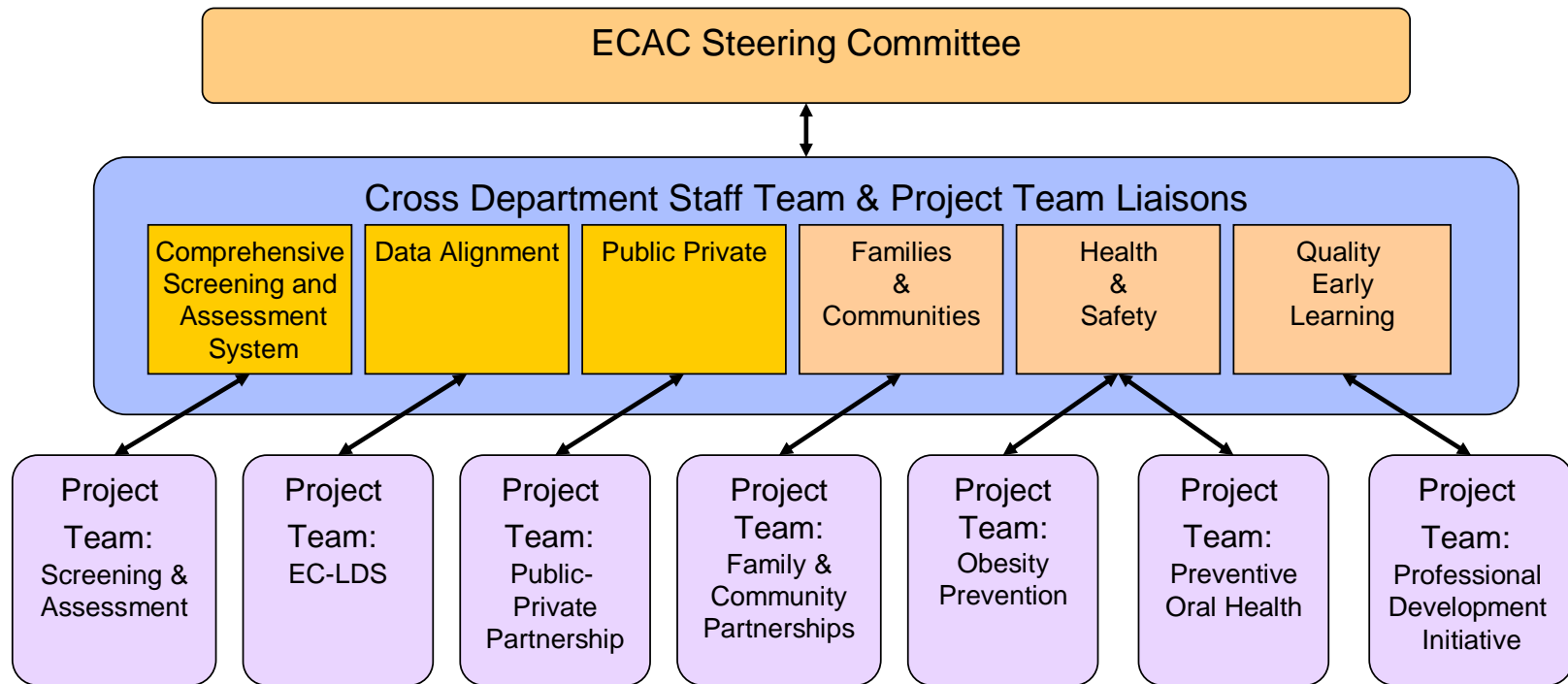
## WI Structure for Early Learning and Development



\*The WI Early Childhood Collaborating Partners Action Team has been folded into this revised committee structure.

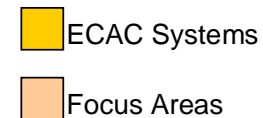
## WI Structure for Early Learning and Development

*Project teams aligned with ECAC system development  
& 3 focus areas with SC staff serving as liaisons.*



\*The Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners Action Teams have been folded into this structure.

\*Outside Individuals/Groups have an opportunity to participate in a project by indicating interest to the SC member chair or the project team leader.



**Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council**  
Working Draft 3/20/12

<i>Section to be completed by the ECAC Steering Committee</i>	
<b>Name of Project Team:</b>	
<b>Co-Chairs:</b> Public- Private-	
<b>ECAC Steering committee Liaison</b>	
<b>Other Staff Resources</b>	
<b>Related ECAC Goal, Charge, or Recommendation</b>	
<b>Brief Rationale: Why this is important:</b>	
<b>Charge:</b>	
<b>Membership Considerations:</b>	
<i>Section to be completed by the Project Team Co-Chairs</i>	
<b>Final Membership:</b>	
<b>Meeting Schedule</b>	
<b>Objectives or Strategies to addressed charge:</b>	
<b>Measurement Of Success:</b>	
<b>Plan for spending up to \$2,000 before 12/20/2012</b>	
<b>Reporting Timeline:</b> May August October	
<b>Outcomes: Deliverables and/or Recommendations:</b>	
<b>Notes:</b>	